

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 12274 150258Z  
ACTION INR-10

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TAGS: PINR FR  
SUBJ: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: FRANCOIS DELMAS,  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY  
OF LIFE

1. FRANCOIS DELMAS WAS APPOINTED SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN APRIL 1978.  
FOLLOWING IS BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: 65-YEAR OLD  
DELMAS IS A LAWYER AND, POLITICALLY, A MEMBER OF  
GISCARD'S REPUBLICAN PARTY. HIS POLITICAL CAREER  
BEGAN IN 1947 WHEN HE WAS A MUNICIPAL ADVISER OF  
MONTPELLIER IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE. IN 1951 HE  
BECAME GENERAL COUNSELOR FOR THE HERAULT AREA. IN 1959  
HE WAS ELECTED MAYOR OF MONTPELLIER AND REMAINED UNTIL  
HIS DEFEAT IN 1977. HE WAS A POPULAR MAYOR,  
RESPONSIBLE FOR MAJOR CITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS AND WAS  
DEFEATED DUE TO BOTH VOTER APATHY AND AN  
AGGRESSIVE SOCIALIST OPPONENT. HE IS A MEMBER OF THE  
POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AND OF THE  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (GISCARD'S PARTY). IN  
1974 HE WAS ACTIVE IN THE CAMPAIGN FOR GISCARD'S  
PRESIDENTIAL BID. DELMAS WAS ELECTED DEPUTY AT THE  
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PAGE 02 PARIS 12274 150258Z

LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS LAST MARCH BUT THIS ELECTION WAS  
CONTESTED AND THE CASE IS TO BE EXAMINED BY THE  
CONSTITUTIONAL COUNCIL. MR. DELMAS DEFEATED HIS  
OPPONENT, GEORGES FRECHE (PS) BY 618 VOTES. THE  
CONTROVERSY CENTERS ON THE SUBSCRIPTION OF SOME 700  
FRENCH CITIZENS RESIDING ABROAD, MOSTLY IN THE IVORY  
COAST.

2. COMMENT: DELMAS HAS BEEN VERY FRIENDLY TO AMERICANS AND WAS AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER OF THE TWINNING OF MONTPELLIER WITH LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY, WHICH HE HAS VISITED. AS MAYOR OF MONTPELLIER, HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR TWO MAJOR CITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS: (1) THE "POLYGON" - AN ULTRAMODERN COMMERCIAL CENTER, AND (2) "LA PAILLADE" - A COMBINATION OF HIGH RISES AND PRIVATE DWELLINGS HOUSING 20,000 PEOPLE AIMED AT IMPROVING THE URBAN CENTER. AS DELMAS HAS POINTED OUT, THE PROJECTS COST HIM VOTES, BUT TODAY THEIR VALUE IS ACKNOWLEDGED.

3. IN A TALK WITH THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR IN FEBRUARY, DELMAS STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF GREATER DECENTRALIZATION IN THE FRENCH POLITICAL SYSTEM (NOT AN UNUSUAL VIEW FOR A LOCAL POLITICIAN BUT ONE ALSO SHARED TO SOME DEGREE BY GISCARD). DELMAS ALSO SAID HE HAD COOPERATED VERY WELL ON THE LOCAL LEVEL WITH THE GAULLISTS, AN INDICATION THAT HE IS NOT ONE OF THOSE IN THE PR WHO IS STRONGLY ANTI-RPR.

HARTMAN

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NNN

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